

THE
ARRAIGNEMENT
OF
COVETOUSNESSE,

In three SERMONS.

BY

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PSALME 119. 36.

Incline my heart to thy Testimonies, and not to Covetousnesse.

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THE
ARRANGEMENT
OF
COVENTGARDEN

In three 2 r m o n s

21

John Stoddard

Order in Council, for the
better of the City of London,
and the County of Middlesex,
in the year 1753.

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A methodicall Analysis of the chiefe things treated on in these Sermons on LUKK 12. 15. as they were perfected by the Author.

A Sermon of Christ.

1 Begun, commending.

{ 1 Sincerity. 1.

{ 2 Magnanimity. 4.

2 Interrupted by a worldling, whose motion

{ 1 Propounded. 13.

{ 2 Answered.

{ 1 Reproved. 14.

{ 2 Improved. 15 in an exhorta-
tion against covetousnesse. { 1 Backed, explicated with
strong reasons.
{ 2 Edged, illustrated with
a Parable.

3 Continued.

{ 1 Occasionally. { 1 Revoking from worldly mindednesse. 22.
{ 2 Provoking to heavenly mindednesse. 31.

{ 2 Intentionally. Exhorting to

{ 1 Watchfulnesse. 35.

{ 1 Propounded, from the condition of

{ 1 Their so doing.

{ 1 Blessednesse of dutie.

{ 2 Wofulnesse of neglect.

{ 2 Masters sodaine comming. 40.

{ 2 Reiterated and enlarged.

{ 1 Occasion. 41.

{ 2 Exhortation.

{ 1, Nature.

{ 1 Felicity in duty. 42.

{ 2 Misery in defect, Abuse. 45

{ 2 Measure to those that sinne of

{ 1 Knowledge, greater. 47.

{ 2 Ignorance, lesse. 48.

{ 2 Meeknesse to

{ 1 Beare brotherly opposition, which

{ 1 Must be expected. 49.

{ 2 May be prelaged. 54.

{ 2 Forbear brotherly contention. 58.

Doct. Covetousnesse is a vice that is hardly discerned, it is a subtile one; it is a vice largely spread, it is a generall one; it is deeply rooted and rooted in the soules of men, and will hardly be beaten out with many reasons and arguments, much working and chafing, it is a vice that is highly to be abhorred, of a very foule nature and consequence, and therefore a vice, that all that will be Christs Disciples should be very curious to observe, and cautious to avoid, to ward and fence themselves against.

1 Explication. Nature of covetousnesse.

1 Premise.

- 1 Prodigall.
- 2 Frugall.
- 3 Liberall.

2 Propound something concerning life

1 Name.

- 1 Large.
- 2 Strict.
- 3 Indifferent.

2 Nature.

1 Description, containing the nature

1 Generall.

- 1 Vice.
- 2 Morall.

- 1 Formall, Affection.
- 2 Radical, understanding.
- 3 Vertuall, Actions.

2 State.

- 1 Line of.
- 2 Extremitie.

3 Rule, Gods will written in

- 1 His owne breast.
- 2 Our hearts.
- 3 The word.

2 Particular.

- 1 Object. Riches.
- 2 Manner. an

1 Liberalitie.

1 Generall.

opposite to

2 Speciall.

- 1 Frugallitie.
- 2 Liberality.
- 3 Magnificence.
- 4 Prodigality.

- 1 Infecting whole soule. }
 - 1 Affections.
 - 2 Apprehensions.
 - 3 Actions. }
 - 1 Thought.
 - 2 Word.
 - 3 Deed.
 - 4 Getting.
 - 5 Saving.
- 2 Exceeding what love requires of. }
 - 1 God.
 - 2 Selfe.
 - 3 Neighbour.

(3. Distribution, according to.

- 1 Subject. in
 - 1 Godly, concomitans.
 - 1 Opposed.
 - 2 Neglected.
 - 2 Wicked predominant.
 - 1 Irraged.
 - 2 Restrained.
- 2 State.
 - 1 Criminall, subservient to
 - 1 Pride.
 - 2 Lust.
 - 2 Capitall.
- 3 Degree.
 - 1 Less.
 - 2 More.

3 Designation of properties.

- 1 In it selfe.
 - 1 Subtile, hardly discerned.
 - 1 Generall.
 - 2 Speciall.
 - 2 How in respects
 - 1 Therefore take heed you do not lightly.
 - 1 Accuse others.
 - 2 Excuse your selves.
 - 3 Univerfall, largely dispersed in all.
 - 1 Sorts. 1 Wicked. 2 Godly.
 - 2 Ranks. 1 Rich. 2 Poore.
 - 3 Vocations. 1 Civil. 2 Ecclesiasticall.
 - 4 Conditions in regard of 1 Sex. 2 Age.
 - 4 Tenacious: deeply rooted, not easily

1. Laid downe.

2. Alayed by any cure of } Religion,
3. Reason.
4. Time.

5. Dangerous.

Proofs.

1. Scripture.

1. Colof. 3. 5.

2. 1 Tim. 6. 9. 10.

3. Luke 16. 14. Pfal. 119. 36.

1. Testimonies. 4. 1 Cor. 6. 10. compared with Ephes. 5. 5.

2. Examples. 5. Exod. 28. 31.

6. 1 Tim. 3. 3.

7. 1 Cor. 5. 10. 11. and Pfal. 10. 3

3. Negative.

1. Nabal.

2. Positive. 2. Laban.

3. Ahab.

4. Demas.

1. Nature; it

2. Opposeth all good of

Grace.

3. Nature.

1. Exposeth to all evil of

1. Sinne.

2. Punishment.

1. In respect of us, it is to be avoided by all

1. Meanes.

2. Warching.

3. Warding.

4. Men.

1. Common.

2. Christians.

2. Application.

1. Conviction.

2. Reprehension.

3. Exhortation to bee.

1. Examination.

2. Humiliation.

3. Reformation, remedies to

1. Venious.

2. Indisious.

3. Conscientious.

4. Ingenuous.

5. Generous.

6. Recover.

7. Prevent.

1. Ha.

1. Ha.

1 Habitual.

- 1 Generall Grace.
- 2 Specuall. 4. Paies.

1 First.

- 1 Humility.
- 2 Temperance.

2 Second. Love of

- 1 God.
- 2 Neighbour.

3 Third.

- 1 Heavenly mindednes.
- 2 Contentednesse.

4 Fourth.

- 1 Faith.
- 2 Wisdome.

2 Actual.

- 1 Watch.
- 2 Pray.
- 3 Strive.
- 4 Meditate of

1 Former arguments in the Doctrine how it

1 Opposeth good of

- 1 Grace.
- 2 Nature.

2 Exposeth to ill of

- 1 Sin against 1 God.
- 2 Neighbour.
- 3 Selves.
- 1 Wrath.
- 2 Scorne.
- 3 Misery.

3 Our Saviours arguments in the Chapter, in 2. degrees.

1 To the disturber in

- 1 Generall, felicity not in superfluity
- 2 Particular, assures not.
- 1 Secures not.
- 2 Delicacy.
- 3 Wisdome.

2 To the Disciples care.

3 Other arguments from Riches.

1 Riches in superfluitie are

- 1 Inconsiderable.
- 2 Vncertaine.
- 3 Vnprofitable
- 4 Hurtfull.

1 Worldly, is

1 Need.

{ 1 Begetting in men, 1
 { 2 Hindering. 3
 { 3 Competency. 4

{ 1 Needleless. 24.
 { 2 Fruitless. 25.
 { 3 Brutish. 26.
 { 4 Heathenish. 27.
 { 5 Murtherfull.
 { 1 Fettered heart. 34
 { 2 Hinders. 35.
 { 3 Heavily, more
 { 1 Bafic. 31.
 { 2 Happy. 32.
 { 3

{ 1 Del. 1
 { 2 Del. 2
 { 3 Del. 3
 { 4 Del. 4
 { 5 Del. 5
 { 6 Del. 6
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 { 100 Del. 100

To the Duke's care.

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To the Duke's care.

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LUKE, Chap. 12. Ver. 15.

*And he said unto them, take heed
and beware of Covetousnesse.*



His Chapter contains in it an excellent and a divine Sermon of our Saviour, to an innumerable multitude of people, gathered together: so that they trod one upon another: In which Chapter, to give you the generall Summe of it, you may observe three things.

1. A Sermon begun, in the beginning whereof our Saviour exhorts to a double vertue: 1. *Sincerity* or simplicity of heart, contrary to *hypocrisie*, and the leaven of the Pharisees, which in the first place he wisheth them to take heed of. *Vers. 1.*

B

2. *Magna*

2. *Magnanimity*, to despise and contemne all difficulties that may occurre, in the free, sincere, and ingenuous profession of a mans religion; not to be afraid of any difficulties, no, though they go as faire as death, *Verse 4.* 2. This heavenly discourse of our Saviour is *interrupted*, by the unmannerly admittance of them which came to this spirituall meeting with carnall hearts, they came to Church to heare Sermons, but their minde was upon their estate, and on outward things; and therefore one of the company, a worldly man, propounds a question to our Saviour, which he answers.

1. The question propounded is in the 13. *Ver.* *And one of the company said unto him, master, speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me:* his brother, it seemes, had the advantage of the possession, and he thought our Saviour was a good man, and it might be easie for him to do a good office: he, not regarding the imployment our Saviour was about, troubles and interrupts him with this unfavoury motion.

2. Our Saviours answer is, partly by his *reproving*, rejecting, condemning of the motion, in the 14. *Verse:* *And he said unto him, man, who made me a judge or a divider over you?* my office is of another nature, and the meaneest Judge in the world can arbitrate this; It is not fit to leave the Word of God, and to serve tables, no not in a work of charity; there are things of a higher nature; but then,

2. He contents not himselfe with this reproof, but

but improves this unseasonable importunity, and takes the opportunity of conveying a very seasonable doctrine or exhortation upon this occasion, that strikes at the very root of the disease which lurked in this man, and so more generally deborts from covetousnesse, which he conceived was the spring of this mans disorder. Now that is,

1. Backed and replicated with a strong reason, in those words, *for the life of man, or the happinesse and content of man, consists not in the abundance of that he possesseth*: the world is mistaken in it, it is not that which makes a man happy, or that which will give a man true content, so I take the meaning of the word to be, although the world promise much.

2. As it is backed with a strong reason, so it is edged and illustrated with a sweet Parable; The great rich man he had a great crop, and bethought himself what to do, to pull downe his barnes, and build them greater, and sing a requiem to his soule, the issue whereof was, *Thou foole*; and such are all they which set up their rest here, and thinke that the life of man consists therein, and that happinesse depends thereon.

3. As our Saviour condemnes, and reproves, so he improves the unmannerly proceedings of this man, and takes occasion to continue his heavenly Sermon, wherein I shall distinguish but these two things.

I. Our Saviour goes on in the occasional argument, which this mans request concerns. Secondly,

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he intentionally adds something that was in his own minde to convey, and that is added to the former occasion.

In the occasionall argument there be these two branches, and I shall but onely mention them, and desire you at leisure to peruse the place, because in this place, and that paralell to the 6. of *Matthew*, is scarce the like argument handled in the whole book of God, nor all the wit of man cannot have more excellent suggestions.

1. He *revokes* his disciples from *worldly-mindednesse*, by many excellent incomparable arguments, *Vers. 22.*

2. He *provokes* them to *heavenly-mindednesse*, in the 31. *Vers*, wishing them not to *seek these things, but the kingdome of God.*

II. He proceeds to his former *intentionall thoughts*, wherein he commends especially two excellent vertues to all his disciples.

1. *Watchfulness*, in the 35. *Vers*, that they would always keep a watchfull posture, preparing for, and expecting the coming of the Lord, to be fitted for it, whenever it should be, sooner or later, sudden or otherwise, and this is,

Propounded and pressed, and then *iterated and enlarged.*

It is *propounded and pressed*, 1. From the condition of a duty, which being *discharged*, makes a man *blessed*, in those words, *And if he come in the second or third watch, and finde them so, blessed are those servants.*

2. From the misery that will follow upon the neglect hereof, in the following words,

of Covetousnesse.

3

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words, *If the good man of the house knew what houre the thiefe would come, he would watch, &c.* 2. It is pressed from the condition of their masters coming, which is expressed to be sudden, no man knowes the houre; and thus farre our Saviour hath propounded and pressed this argument of watchfulnesse.

2. Upon a particular occasion he doth reiterate and enlarge the prosecution of this very argument: the occasion is expressed in the 41 Verse, Peter steps in, and puts the question, not so unmannerly as before, but proper enough for the Auditory: *Master, speakest thou this parable unto us, or to all?* This gives our Saviour occasion to re-inforce his former exhortation, wherein are the same arguments I mentioned before, partly from the felicity in the discharge of this duty, how happy and blessed is that man, that when his Lord commeth, shall finde well doing, preparing and fitting himselfe for that meeting; and then the misery and the wofull condition of the evill servant, who instead of giving a portion to his Lords servants, shall presume his master will not yet come, but delay and prolong the time, and fall to beat and abuse his fellow-servants. I conceive in this place, and other places of Scripture, where this evill servant is mentioned (besides the generall notion of any that carrieth himselfe disorderly) I say, it hath a particlar intention against that evill servant in particular, that Antichrist, whom the Lord shall destroy with the breath of his mouth, and abandon with the brightnesse of his coming, finding him drunke with the blood of the Saints, This evill servant, I say, will be in a very

evill and sad condition. Our Saviour farther expresseth this by adding one thing concerning the *measure of this evill*, that will befall the unfaithfull servant, and he propounds it as a rule of the misery, the *miserie wilbe great*; as this is done more out of *knowledge*, he which knoweth his masters will, which sinneth hypocritically, against the light, against conscience, those will have a double share in the misery, and it will be more fearefull to them: it will be something *mitigated* to them which *know lesse*, yet bad enough, as is expressed in the 47 and 48 *Verses*. This was the first vertue that our Saviour exhorts unto, watchfulnesse and carefulnesse to prepare that they may not be surprized with his sudden comming.

2. The second vertue our Saviour exhorts unto, is *spirituall wisdom*, although there be some ambiguity in some interpreters, either meeknesse or spirituall wisdom, it is agreed upon.

There be two things wherein this is recommended in generall.

1. In bearing *unbrotherly oppositions*; and our Saviour tels them, that this is that which *must be expected*, and *may be presaged* and fore-seen. 1. It *must be expected*, *Vers. 49.* for our Saviour tels them plainly, that *he came to send fire on the earth*; and not to make a *carnall peace*, but to convey the light of the Gospell, the events whereof would breed combustions, wicked men opposing the preaching of the Gospell, and of the godly, and this is made evill by those which are nearest to them, in the same house, *Verses 52, 53.* Our Savi-

our

our prepares them with this before-hand, that they may meekely and wisely beare unbrotherly oppositions. 2. In which this meeknesse consists more particularly, to *forbeare brotherly contention*: Or, as some interpret it, it may rather be expressed thus, to take care to make peace with God so much the more, *agree with thine adversary*, it may commend brotherly conjunction: for those which are brethren, they shall meet with oppositions in the world, they had not need to devoure one another: Or, as many interpreters say, that adversary is God, which, while we are in this world, we should make our peace with, since we can have so little peace in the world; therefore our Saviour puts his servants in mind, that it is a great point of wisdom, at the least, to make their peace with God, that they may have sweet comfort from him in the midst of all bitterness in the world. I omitted one thing that I should have spoken, in opposition to the two things that must be expected, which the condition of the Gospell will produce, and that *may be presaged*, in the 54. *Vers. And he said unto all the people, &c.* If men were but so wise to observe those prognostications of grace, and the way of the times of the Gospell, as they are to prognosticate the face of the heavens, when they see the evening faire and red, they presage faire weather, and on the appearance of a cloud, fowle weather: if men were so wise in the face of Scripture, they might fore-see when calmes and stormes are likely to fall, when they are like to fall into opposition
and

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and affliction, and so wisely might prepare and arme for the same.

Out of all give me leave to mention one thing needfull, from the unseasonable and rude motion of the worldly-minded man, interrupting our Saviours Sermon with an earthly question, viz.

It is no new thing nor strange, that men should bring carnall hearts to spirituall duties.

You are not secure by being in the house of God, by hearing Sermons, but you may be full of carnall thoughts, if you be not carefull to purge them out, you may be thinking of your house, moneyes, or trade, talking, or bartering about worldly things, and so turning the Church into an Exchange, or you may be gazing after poorer things, this bodies fashion, or that bodies dresse, but every one should be carefull of that. To omit all other things, I shall onely fasten upon one observation, and propound that, so as it may be comprehensive to take the very substance of the truth, of the whole doctrine that our Saviour propounds, and I shall expresse it thus.

Doctrine.

Covetousnesse is a vice that is hardly discerned, it is a subtile one, it is a vice largely spread, it is a generall one, it is deeply rooted and riveted in the soules of men, and will hardly be beaten off with many reasons and arguments much working and chafing, it is a vice that is highly to be abhorred, of a very foule nature and consequence, and therefore a vice that all that will be Christs disciples should be very curious to observe, and cautious to avoid, to ward and fence themselves against.

You

You see every one of these contained and intimated in the very words of our Saviour, although I might have made so many severall observations, yet I chose rather to contract all into one; And I hold it very expedient so to do; that if a man can but remember the point, he may carie away all the maine things that are said concerning it, though he may forget other particulars, yet he may have the maine in the observation: But before I enter into the explication of the point, I shall *1. Pre-mise one caution*: there be three sorts of men which happily may be here, that may take some offence at this doctrine, taking things with a wrong hand, and hearing them with a wrong eare, which are delivered right.

1. The prodigall man may laugh in his sleeve, and be tickled, thinks he, I am shor-free, this Sermon concernes not me, I am not guilty of that sin, the world knowes it, and I proclaime it well enough, and this may please him, and so harden him, while he stands jeering at another man that walks contrary to him.

2. The frugall man, he is cleane contrary, he is a sober and a good husband, and he thinks it his wisdom to be so, as indeed it is, in a vertuall way, and with moderation, but he is offended, and thinks this may touch him many wayes, taking that to himselfe which is aimed against covetousnesse, as though it were spoken to him.

3. The liberall man, he may take some offence, which is in the right path and line of vertue, he may receive some prejudice, because he is not

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onely free from extremes, but is conscious of the contrary vertue, and so he may dance upon the rope of confidence, and be secure in that one vertue, as though he need no more; whereas a man may have one vertue, and be liable to many reproches, not being out of the gun-shot, therefore he should not be confident, of that one, but rather extend himselfe to every one. And I desire every one of these whom it may concerne, that they may by this caution be advised to take heed of offence or scandall, which may hinder them in their way.

2. And so I come to the explication of the point, wherein I shall *propound*,

1. Something concerning the name, *covetousnesse*.

2. Concerning the nature, and so shall endeavour to cleare the thing,

First, by a discription of it, what it is.

Secondly, by a distribution of it, according to the severall kinds and ranks of it.

Thirdly, by a short designation of the properties of it: not such as might make signes and characters of it, but such onely as I expressed particularly in the point.

1. This onely I shall note concerning the name, *covetousnesse*, (for I cannot well go about to define any thing, what it is, except first the name be agreed upon: for names and words play fast and loose, and so the definition must varie, according to the latitude of the words.) To omit all Metaphors, and such which are farther off, there

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there is a threefold latitude of this word.

1. It is taken in a *large sense*, and so it comprehends all *inordinate desire*, more than that which is properly called *covetousnesse*, or which our Saviour aims at in this place *sovetousnesse* or *concupiscence* after any thing, it may reach to all things inordinately desired: As for example, to mention but three creatures, that there may be concupiscence after, honour, lust, and riches: Now we have nothing to do with it after this large sense.

2. It is taken in a *strict sense*, which I desire not to make use of, though it is used by some Divines, as indeed every one will have his owne apprehension, and yet there is no great difference: for my part, so long as things are agreed on, I shall never make contention about words, for that were but to hinder all knowledge.

Know therefore, some take the word more strictly than is necessary, they would have covetousnesse to be an inordinate appetite onely in regard of keeping and saving riches, and not to reach to getting of them.

3. I take it here in a *moderate indifferent sense*, and so it is all inordinate desire toward riches in that excessive way, our affections and inclinations being set on them inordinately: I take covetousnesse in that middle sense, which comprehends both desiring inordinately, and getting inordinately, and saving inordinately: either desiring, getting, or saving inordinately, this is covetousnesse.

And this being premised concerning the word, I shall in the second place endeavour to expresse

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the nature of it, first, in a briefe description, which I promise not to be accurate in, because it is not easie to define it accurately, for an accurate definition should have nothing but the meere essentials, and all the essentials, which is wonderfull hard in all things, especially in morall things, but rather a rude draught or description, which may be sufficient for ordinary understandings, and for the generall use of men: What I conceive sufficient for the nature of the thing, I expresse it thus.

Covetousnesse is a morall vice, or an inordinate affection toward riches, or worldly things, whereby the whole heart of man is inclined excessively thereto, and inordinately carried towards them, arising from a judgement perverted, and producing perverse fruits or actions.

There bee two things to bee dilated and enlarged in briefe, for it will be necessary to lay the foundation thoroughly, because the true understanding of this comprehends all that shall be built upon it: As there is in all descriptions, the generall nature and the particular nature wherein the formality of the thing consists: So it is in this description, for it containes,

1. The generall nature of this, it is a vice, and a morall vice.

1. *It is a vice:* for there be two kinds of dispositions which the soule of man is capable of; there is a crooked disposition and a straight; that disposition of the soule which is right in the right frame, toward any thing, that disposition is ver-
tuous,

tnous, and there is a crooked disposition, and that is, when the soule is not in its right temper, and that is vice, being not in the rank of vertue, which is a commendable ornament that beautifies the soule, but in the rank of vice, which is a staine and a spot that defiles and shames the soule.

2. It is a *morall vice*. There be two sorts of vertues and vices, *intellectuall*, and *morall*; wisdom is an intellectuall vertue, and so all the pregnancy of the intellectuall part of the understanding, these excellencies of the understanding are intellectuall vertues, but this is none of those, but a morall vice, there be morall vices which corrupt mens hearts, the inclinations of their soule being corrupt, their understanding, and the will and affections are corrupt, and this is of that nature, it is a morall deformitie: Now in a morall vice there be these two things which are most principally considerable, and I shall briefly touch them, because I would have this description, though rude, yet usefull, not onely for describing this particular thing, but for any man to frame a description of vertues or vices by.

Two things are most considerable in a morall vice.

First, the *seat* of it, and that is the soule of man, and the soule universall; and so it is,

1. *Formally*, in the will and affections, which are the proper seat of every morall vice or vertue. I conceive the will and the affections are in reality the same, and without all question, according to the generall opinion of all the learned, the proper

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seat of every morall vice or vertue is in the affections, in the right or wrong temper of the affections or will; when the will is right set, it hath attained to vertue; when it is wrong set, it hath attained to vice: therefore I chose to describe it principally to be an inordinate affection; yet withall I added some other things (because there is a generall pollution of the soule by this vice) although the proper seat be in the will, yet it hath an influence into, and defiles the rest of the faculties: and so it is,

2. *Radically, in the understanding*, for there is no deformity in the will and affections; but there is a concurrent distemper in the understanding, it framing a wrong judgement and opinion; for that is the *radix* whence the affections are misled and mis-informed; and as all virtues, so all vices are formally and radically in the understanding, and all the rest of the faculties of the soule; so they are,

3. *Virtually, in the actions*, for the propensity of the soule towards virtues or vices, towards right or wrong, is manifest in ordinate or inordinate acts; I say, in the actions, though vice be seated formally in the will, and radically in the understanding, yet it appears virtually in the actions.

Secondly, the second thing considerable in a morall vice or vertue, is the *state*, nature and qualities of them, wherein you may observe two things. 1. The *line*, or *horizon*, that divideth betwixt vertue and vice. 2. The *rule*, by which we finde

finde out this line. The *line* that divides betwixt vertue and vice, I expresse thus: when a man keeps the golden path of mediocrity, then a man is in the right line of vertue, when his wayes are equinoxiall, even, when he swerves from this, his affections, and so his actions, depending on them, swerve, either to the right hand, or to the left, either to excesse, beyond the line, or defect, short of the line, then is an aberration from the line of vertue, and so a man is in hazard of vice.

2. The *rule* of this mediocrity: The Philosophers, as the Naturalists observe, found no other compasse to finde out the right line, that when vertue runs even, as wisdom shall direct, the truth is, it must be the voice of judgement and discretion that must judge of all morall vertues, to prescribe the path of the affections, a right and due temper must be kept, and that they may be in a due temper, all must be described by wisdom: But to speake more Theologically, it is the will of the wise God that is the rule of mediocrity, which is written partly in his *owne brest*, in the holinesse of his owne nature, as the way that men must walke in; partly *written in our hearts*, so farre as they come into right reason, to be judged either as reason is originally right, or rectified. In time of innocency, reason was a competent judge, because it was not depraved, and full of light and beauty, all darknesse being dispelled (by those heavenly beames) which did serve for the guiding of a mans life, but now nature is corrupt, and it is as hard to have right reason, as it is to say what mediocrity

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diocrity is, therefore I add in the third place, *written in the word*, as the will of God is written in his owne brest, in the holinesse of his owne nature, and in our hearts; so all vertue is but an extract of something in the mount, according to that patterne which is left written in the word, God revealing to his people his will, and the way of holinesse, which is pleasing and acceptable to him, that must be the judge and rule by which we must discern the line of mediocrity, wherein vertue consists, swerving from which in the one, or defect in the other, is vice. And so much concerning the generall nature of it, that it is a vice, and a morall vice.

2. Now to add something concerning the *particular*, that which makes the formality of this vice of covetousnesse, that you may discern it from other vices, I would propound but two things.

1. Something *more generall*; consider the *object*, and the *Act* towards that Object.

1. The *Object*; for every kinde of vice or vertue receives its *species* from the Object: now the Object is *riches*, the obliquity of it is by way of excessse, as the obliquity of the soule in matters of pleasure is lust or wantonnesse, in matters of honour is pride or ambition: Covetousnesse is the obliquity which is in respect of riches and worldly goods, that is, when we are carried towards them inordinately, aiming at more than is competent: what is *competent*, may be judged by *nature*, what is *necessary* and *sufficient* for nature, may be judged

judged by *reason*, what is *reasonable*, may be judged by *faith*, now to be desirous, and covet, and lust after more than such a competency, to go beyond competency, besides necessity, reason or faith, this is a vicious disposition toward riches, this is all I shall say in generall concerning the object, that it is a vice, the exercise whereof gives a vicious tincture and perverse inclination to the soule, when it hath to deale with riches; onely let me add by way of caution, most of all, both Philosophers and others, make covetousnesse to be a vice in the defect, not in the excessse: I am hard to believe, but it is the excessive carriage of the soule towards riches, but this is easily reconciled; if men consider vices with relation to vertue, take the excessse and the defect as they stand in the habit to vertue, then covetousnesse is a defect to liberality; for liberality is the moderate seeking after riches and using of them, prodigality is the excessse, and covetousnesse prevaricates from the rule in the mount, in, or by way of defect, excessse, being something opposite: but if you take it according to the object, as they stand in habit with the object: for my owne part, with submission to others, I conceive that covetousnesse is rather in the excessse, than in the defect, in forcing the soule to worldly things, when a man is like the woman in the Gospell, that had a spirit of infirmity, bowes downe toward earthly things: prodigality is a defective carriage, when a man regards them not with due moderation, but throwes all out at windowes: upon the point they come both to the

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same point and issue, and what I have said of this, may be said of all vertues and vices.

2. More particularly, the exorbitance of this covetousnesse may be apprehended, partly by the *opposition* in which it stands to other things, partly in its owne *proper temper and disposition*. 1. For the *opposition*, there be two things to which covetousnesse is opposed in the same ranke, respecting the same object of riches, it is opposed to,

1. *Liberality*, in all the ranks and degrees, and,

2. To *prodigality*; I onely note this by the way, although we generally mention but one vertue upon the line in matter of estate, and that is liberality; yet this liberality may have a threefold latitude, it may comprehend three distinct branches, the distinction of which may be taken diverse wayes.

The lowest rank to which covetousnesse is opposed to liberality, is *frugality*; he which is frugally liberall, which hath but a meane estate, and in a meane businesse, though he be sparing, yet he keepes the character and temper of vertue, according to the proportion of the estate, nature, and condition of his businesse.

The middle story to which covetousnesse is opposed to liberality, is that we call *moderate liberality*, that is in those which have but ordinary estates, and in ordinary cases, to be simply liberall, and not to aime at great proportions in ordinary cases, men of ordinary places, ordinary liberality is the true character.

The highest story is *magnificence*, to be more than

than liberall, to exceed proportion, either taken from proportion of a mans estate, as a great man is not liberall, except he be magnificent, proportionable to his estate, or to the thing, the business he is about to act; a man is not liberall to the publike good, which is barely liberall, if he be not magnificent according to his estate, and proportionable to the publike good, it is not right; for magnificence is the true temper of liberality, which magnificence may be taken in respect of two severall things.

1. In regard of the person in whom it is: there be persons which are of meane condition, it is enough for them, according to their estate and condition, to be frugall; and so they shall carrie themselves virtually, though they goe no farther than frugall liberality, with respect to their means and condition. Others, which are of a middle sort, it is not enough for them to be frugally liberall, but they must be *liberally liberall*, or els they come within the compasse of covetousnesse; though it be not sordid and base covetousnesse, yet they are not without the verge. The last rank are those which have fullest estates; it is not enough for them to be frugally liberall, nor liberally liberall, they will not avoid covetousnesse, except they be *magnificently liberall*, still to keep the proportion: if he which hath a great estate, doth no more than he which hath a meane one, or an indifferent one; he doth covet basely, because he doth not magnificently, as his estate affords.

2. In regard of the severall cases, and so there

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be three severall cases, in which these severall ranks may be considered, and accordingly expressed.

1. *Triviall and ordinary cases*, and there frugall liberality is sufficient.

2. *Great and necessary cases*, and there liberall liberality is to be expressed.

3. *Vrgent and extraordinary cases*, and there, according to a mans proportion, magnificent liberality is required.

I remember an observation that the *Rabbins* have, it may be it may please some of this auditory, but in a perverse way; I desire there may be no misconstruction; they give this rule, to have every man carry himselfe according to his estate; the thing they specify is in matter of cloathes, or apparell; they would have every man keep to his estate, and yet they allow of some excesse, and some defect, yet so, as liberality may rule: the thing is this, cloath thy wife above thy estate, cloath thy children according to thy estate, and cloath thy selfe beneath thy estate; they allow excesse on the one side, and defect on the other, and so upon the point they are made even; if there be excesse in one, moderation in another, and defect in another, that makes the supply; the thing I note it for, is not for the particular, but for the generall, according to the three ranks how we may regulate our selves, according to the three rules, and those according as the case requires, whether in a way of frugality, liberality, or magnificence: I give but this rule proportion to that,

for

for matter of diet and apparell, an ingenuous frugall liberality is commendable, rather keep within the compasse, it is the best rule of vertue that can be given in this case, because the excesse, or inclining to excesse, doth but foment vice, as excesse in diet, sloathfulnesse, which hinders and impaires the intellectuall parts, excesse in apparell is but a flag of pride, and an inclination to it: therefore in those things the best rule is, to keep the temper of frugality, go in a liberall way, not sordidly, but in a way of frugality, rather under, than above a mans estate.

There be some other things, wherein the character of liberality lieth, to be observed, I will mention but two; towards the *diligent labourer*, and towards the *neecessitated begger*, and there go a little beyond the compasse of frugality; be not penurious, pinching the labourers wages, and beating it downe, or the poore trades-mans ware: do as you would be done by; for it may be better almes, and baser covetousnesse, to grate upon the poore labourer, beat downe the hire upon the poore man that selleth his commodity, so as he cannot live; herein goe in an ingenuous liberall way.

There be other things that characterize magnificence, in all publike services, which are for the publike good, for the good of the Church, or the advancement of the glory of God; for the good of the common-weale, or the service of the King, and the supporting his State and Honour, the best way is to baulk a frugall way, transcend a meere

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liberall way, and *Araunah*-like, go in a magnificent way, rather beyond our selves; for if I abate something below the rule in diet and apparell, I shall have scope to exalt my selfe above my self in the publike good; this was the first thing to which covetousnesse is opposed to liberality; comming short thereof is, when a man forbears to go according to the rule of vertue, and keeps aloof off.

2. On the other side, covetousnesse is opposed to *prodigality*, it is so farre from comming short of the rule of moderation, that it exceeds, the golden line is a free, ingenuous, liberall using and spending these things, as discretion shall prescribe: but when a man is beyond the bounds, carelesse for matter of estate, riches, throw all away in a night, upon dice or vaine courses, the extremity is in the excesse.

2. But now, besides the opposition, the *proper temper and disposition* of covetousnesse doth best characterize it, it doth *infect the whole soule*, although formally it be,

1. In the *affections*, an inordinate affecting, and a love towards money, love of having much, immoderate desire, and immoderate griefe and vexation, if he have them not; immoderate feare, if there be any danger of losing them; it may be circumscribed by any of these inordinate affections, it is the desire, or love, either of them will expresse it fully, immoderate or inordinate love to riches, affecting of them, that is the defilement of the soule, in regard of the affections.

In

2. In the apprehension radically, it is in the understanding, which ariseth from some misconceit in the understanding; I will but mention one or two of the maine. In the understanding an overweening of worldly things; a man thinks there is a great deale more good and excellency, more desirable, and more conducible towards his happinesse and content, than indeed they do; he hath an erroneous opinion concerning the excellency of them, if he did not esteeme them so highly, he would never affect them so deeply; for a mans affections depend upon his opinion.

There is another root of bitterness, and that is atheisme, or infidelity, or diffidence; when men are poysoned with a low esteeme of Gods providence, thinking Gods Word is not to be taken heed of; they dare not trust Gods providence, but themselves, and their own solicitous care, for providing for themselves, dare not give any allowance to Gods providence, these are the maine roots of covetousnesse in the understanding.

3. It manifesteth it selfe in *perverse actions*, the actions are depraved.

1. *The thoughts* are tainted with caring immoderately, alwayes plodding, running with thorny cares, vexing and tormenting the soule with desires, that he is continually upon the rack with carking and caring thoughts.

2. *His speeches* are perverse, a thousand to one if his breath smell not of earth, all his talke is of his worldly businesse, how he may compass such a possession; if he would shew but as much love

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love to God, as he doth to his mammon, it were well.

3. His deeds, they also are polluted.

There be two maine actions which are inordinate, *getting*, and *having*.

1. *Getting*, falling on inordinate courses, riches must be had, however they come by them, by faire or foule play; covetousnesse is a snare put on by the devill and our owne corrupt lust, which makes us *venture* (when we see a bait) upon any inordinate action.

2. *Saving and keeping* will be inordinate, he will be pinching and penurious, scarce enjoying what he hath; it is a death to part with any thing, he parts with so much bloud out of his veines, as perice out of his purse; it goeth to his heart and soule: inordinate getting, keeping, and saving; this is the first thing, I add but a second.

2. As covetousnesse *infecteth the whole soule*, so the inordinatenesse of it appeares in the *exceeding*

in what love requires, and is either } Of God,
 } Our selves, or
 } Neighbour.

The inordinatenesse of it shewes it selfe especially in the affections; and this I shall expresse in all these three things.

First, that is apparent covetousnesse, and weares the livery and cognizance of covetousnesse, when it neglects what *love* requires, and is either against religion, or justice, or charity, those that stick not to trespasse on any duty of love,

I will mention all under that name, are deeply guilty,

1. When men feare not to trespasse on the *love of God*, and of holy duties, love worldly things so, as they will dispense with the love of God, trample on Gods backe, breake all rules of piety, rather than not come to his covetousnesse.

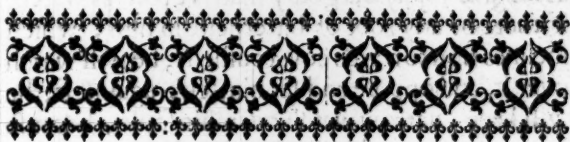
2. When a man tramples most unnaturally upon the *love of a mans selfe*, that which hee oweth to himselfe; he will spend no time on his soule, to feed that, for feare hee should have too little for the world. Nay, hee will starve his soule, and body also, to save charges, that he may grow rich, and scrape together these outward things, he cares not though hee pinch himselfe, and those that belong unto him.

3. When the love of the world is predominant, above the *love of his neighbour*, that hee can breake the law of justice or charity, break the *law of justice*, so that he will wrong, defraud, cozen, or cheat his neighbour any way, or dammage him, accounting all to be fish that comes to his net, so it may but feed his covetousnesse: this is an inordinate affection toward riches clearly, the very disease and leprosie sticking in his fore-head. And not onely when men breake the law of justice, but when they break the *law of charity*, that can withhold what they ought, or might do, or are called upon to do in that way, wither his

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hand from giving almes, straiten him from his own flesh, it is death with him to part with any thing; in a word, when he can dispense with the love of God, himselfe, and his neighbour, breaking the duty of love, justice and charity; and all for the love of money; this is a cleare character of inordinatenesse after riches, and worldly things.

LXXII



LUKE, Chap. 12. Ver. 15.

*And he said unto them, take heed
and beware of Covetousnesse.*



Thus of the description of the nature of covetousnesse, I shall add a word concerning the second.

2. The *distribution* of it: and so it may receive a distribution, or distinction, three wayes. 1. In regard of the *subject*. 2. In regard of the *state* in which it may be. 3. In regard of the *degree*.

I. In regard of the *subject*, there is a double kinde of covetousnesse.

1. It may be incident to the *godly*, as a *concomitant*, being the relick of originall sinne, the seeds of all vices are in him, and so there is a naturall propensity still remaining towards covetousnesse, even in a godly man; but it is but a concomitant, it doth not beare sway at all in him; for in some measure it is subdued and mortified; although it may be something, more or lesse, towards predominancy. It may be considered in a godly man

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as *diligent y opposed*, a godly man is upon his watch, if there be any root of bitterneffe in him, which inclines him towards covetousnesse, he will watch over it, and oppose and set himselfe against it, he will keep a narrow watch over his soule, because he is conscious of his inclination thereunto.

2. The other kind of covetousnesse is incident to a *wicked man*, and it is in him *predominant*, he is a servant, and a slave, he makes it his calling, he gives himselfe over, and subjects himselfe to it, it rules him, for he is wholly bent that way, but this admits of some differency; *viz.* even in a wicked man it may be sometimes *inraged* like a flame, with infinite fury, so that it beares downe all before it, sometimes also it may be *restrained*, there may be restraining grace in a wicked man, that keeps him from exorbitancie, though there is no saving grace, to mortifie it, and so it retaines the same nature of covetousnesse: herein he is like the Foxe; the disposition of the Foxe is to devoure when he is in the chaine, yet he devoures not the Lambs, because he is chained; a wicked covetous man may have the same wild disposition in him, which is naturall, but God may bridle & curb him from acting, and keep him in faire termes, that he is not so outrageous as many are.

II. Another distinction of covetousnesse is, in regard of the *different state* of covetousnesse in those persons where it is, godly or wicked men, there is no estate wherein it is, but it is a crime, be it in the lowest estate; 1. Sometimes covetousnesse may be *criminall*, as it may be subservient,

not

not the maine vice, but a servant to other vices; covetousnesse, as a sin, may serve some other lust, although I cannot denominate covetousnesse to be the ruling sinne, yet it is in a man, and serves his turne, as a side-wind, to serve some other lust. As for example: Sometimes a mans principall sin is pride; now because pride must have something to maintaine it, and therefore a man must use his covetousnesse as a servant to his pride, to furnish that, to bring him in trappings for his pride, which otherwise would be hungry; pride would starve it selfe without it: this is frequent, men will scrape, and rape, and keep a foule adoe, to oppresse, grate, and grinde the faces of men; yet it is not done principally out of covetousnesse, but rather as an act of pride; covetousnesse being a servant to pride: alas his sinne may not be covetousnesse, he glorieth not in hoarding up money, but he must live at such a rate, in such a fashion, he must have gay cloathes, and he is necessitated to be covetous, not because his inclination is thereunto, but because he cannot else support his pride.

Another corruption that covetousnesse waits upon, is lust: a man which is given to lust, he cannot feed his lust without meat and drink, to stuffe the pot, he cannot maintain his harlots, or nourish himself in that sin, nor furnish himself without covetousnesse; and that makes him injurious, to steal from parents, or masters, use any trick of covetousnesse, but it is not out of love thereunto, covetousnesse is not his sin, but a servant to his lust; so that in both these respects covetousnesse may

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be in a man, but yet in the estate of a servant.

2. Sometimes also covetousnesse is not onely the *criminall*, but the *capitall vice*, which doth apparently denominate a man to be a covetous man, although he may have other vices, yet this is the chiefe, this is his grace, and in this case covetousnesse is a friend to him, it is instead of pride, for he prides himselfe in his great estate, and herein covetousnesse is not a servant to pride, but the very throne of pride, which makes his pride sit higher, he is proud, but upon concept of his great heape of money, looking over the shoulder of his poore neighbour, and thus a man is proud, but it issues from his bags, his great estate, covetousnesse is the maine sinne; so in many other kinds a man may instance, wherein covetousnesse is the master-sinne, when a man makes it his glory, and his very trade, to gather a great estate together, not for any use of it, but that he can get such an estate.

III. The last distinction of covetousnesse is in *regard of the degrees*, as all vertues and vices, they are capable of degrees: It may be, in some *lesse*, in some *more*, in some it may be hardly discerned, in others so palpable, that it may be felt; there is a sordid base covetousnesse, that all the world may see a man is covetous, he beares it in his fore-head, in every act that he doth, in all his carriage and course: Others slyly dissemble covetousnesse; are not so sordidly and so basely covetous; but more slyly carrie the businesse; men that are inwardly covetous, dissembling the businesse,

finesse, or, at least, carrying it a great deale better.

2. Now to come briefly to the *predicate*, or the thing we affirme concerning covetousnesse: there be two things that I have propounded in the point concerning covetousnesse.

First, something *in regard of it selfe*. Secondly, something *in respect as it stands to us*.

1. In regard *of it selfe*, there be these four properties of covetousnesse that I shall note.

1. It is a *subtill* and a *slie sinne*, hardly discerned, by every man, neither in himselfe, nor others; a man may be in before he is aware; and that ariseth partly from a *generall ground of vice*, because all vices are subtill and slie, they can borrow habits, and dresse themselves in the attyre of virtues; covetousnesse may claime kindred with, and go under the habit of frugality, partly, upon a *particular ground*, there is something in covetousnesse which makes it more hard to be discerned; because there be more faire pleas for this, than for any other sinne in the world: as, to provide for children and posterity, for a mans estate and condition, to support his rank, a thousand things a man may plead for covetousnesse, there is more to be said for that a great deale, than for many other sinnes, as luxury and riot, uncleannesse and filthinesse, although they be works of darknesse, and men are ashamed, if they once be discovered *de facto* to be guilty of them, their mouthes are stopped, but this is a more subtill sinne, and will admit of a great many colours, therefore it walks more close, and is hardly to be discerned:

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In this respect it is a point of Christian prudence, to take notice of it, and, by the way, to make use of this: Now there may be these two things deduced, for it may be very usefull for practise.

1. Because it is a flie and subtil sinne, I would wish every man, not lightly or rashly to accuse another man of it, and upbraid him with it, but look to his warrant and ground for it, if it be ambiguous, and his actions may admit of a faire construction, I must not judge him, I know not a mans estate, and many other such like circumstances may fall in, and therefore I may not presently condemne another of covetousnesse.

2. Another point of wisdom, rather more necessary, is that we should not easily excuse our selves, presently blesse not thy selfe, as if thou couldst shun, decline, and avoid all reproof, thinking this sinne of covetousnesse concerns not me, it doth not hit me so home; in many things it is hard to prove that which is clearely true: a man cannot by the law prove a man is drunk, unless he be so grossely drunk, that he is not able to keepe out of a carts way, and many other signes of a *legall prooffe*, are hard, but yet a *conscientious prooffe* betwixt God and a mans owne conscience, may be discerned: though thy sinne be such a flie sinne as covetousnesse, that another man is loath, happily, to charge it upon thee, remember it is a flie sinne, and may lie at the heart, suspect thy selfe therefore, and do not easily excuse it.

2. It is an *universall and generall sinne*, largely disperfed, our Saviours words implie so much, therefore

therefore saith he, *take heed, and beware*; there is a double caution, as if he had said, you had need to watch, and to looke narrowly to it; it is a flie sin, a Jugler, that will cast a thousand mists before your eyes: and withall, it implies that it is a generall sinne, I speake to *all of you*, saith our Saviour to his Disciples, and others also, as if this were a generall root of bitternesse all the world over; and in truth it is so, a man may see it universally: for,

I. There is no *rank* or *sort* of men, which are altogether free.

1. Wicked men, some seeme to walke contrary to it, in prodigality; yet either in predominancie, or subserviencie, scarce a wicked man but he is covetous; he which is prodigall must scrape unjustly to maintaine that.

2. Godly men are not altogether free, there are the relickes of this corruption in originall sin, and it sheweth it selfe even in them; godly men may doe it under pretence of religion, they (as he said) are then only godly, when godlinesse is sparing, and frugall: many men are against drunkennesse in their families, because it spends their estates, under a vizor of godlinesse they keep men sober; so that a man may pretend religion, and yet within have a root of covetousnesse.

II. It is in all sorts and rankes of men.

1. Poore men think they are not capable of it, and yet notwithstanding, their desires may be as large as hell, there may be as much covetousnesse in a poore man, as in a rich man.

2. Rich men it is evident that they are exceeding

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ding obnoxious to it, the having of much, increaseth the desire of having of more.

3. It is to be found among all *callings*, the Citizen, the Countrey-man, the Trades-man, the Gentleman, the Minister, the Lawyer, all callings, whether Civill or Ecclesiasticall, even Churchmen may be subject to covetousnesse, it is a disease that every ranck may be infected withall.

4. In regard of every mans *condition*, there is no sex nor age free, those to whom it belongs to take the care of families, women also as they are more impotent, their affections are more inordinate, and so they are more unreasonably covetous: in all ages it is, although it be more rare in younger age, covetousnesse is not so proper thereto, youth is not free, but old age especially.

III. It is also a *tenacious sinne*, deeply rooted, and therefore not easily laid downe, of our owne accord, a thousand to one, if a man lay it downe of his owne accord, to have so much goodnesse of himselfe as to strip himselfe of this vice, not one of a thousand doth it, no nor is it easily allayed or beaten downe, not by those meanes by which vices may be cured.

There are three things which may cure any vice. First, the *authority of religion*. Secondly, the *weight of reason*. Thirdly, the *tract of time*.

1. The best curing is, when the *authoritie of religion* will do it, if when a man heares the word of God, a man is readie to say, speake Lord for thy servant heares, that man is in a good temper, when he will be beaten from vice by the word of God,

God, God hath so much authority over his soule, that if hee heare this sinne is displeasing to him, he will owne none of it, but throw it out of his hands, as children many times at the very word of their parents, and this is the best: but covetousnesse is so tenacious, and rooted in many, as many words from God will not worke, to get it removed: our Saviour here is faine to use many words and arguments, besides his owne authority his bare word will not doe it.

2 The *weight of reason* may step in and second religion, shewing the deformitie and basenesse of it, and convincing the conscience, and yet this will not do it: surely that is not a good temper, when men will not be regulated by reason, when it is neither wit nor reason that will make the cure; our Saviour is faine to heape reason upon reason, I dare say, never any thing more larger discoursed of, and more fully convinced, then our Saviour doth here in this Chapter, and in *Matthew*, and yet all reason will not doe it, not beat it downe it was so tenacious, and stickt so closely.

3 Many things, neither authority of religion, nor weight of reason, yet *time it self* will cure them: love is overcome with time, but time doth not cure covetousnesse, but rather inflame it: the longer a man is acquainted, the lesse he growes weary, seeing no inconvenience in this sinne of covetousnesse, although it pinch him a thousand times, and ride him basely, yet (thinks he) it is no such base thing, although indeed it makes a man so fordid and base, that it tramples upon his nature,

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and his very excellencies, and makes him a base drudge, and the longer he is in it, the more beast-like he is, the better he likes it: and whereas age cures many distempers, time when it comes to end, frees a man, being wearie, and having runne themselves out of breath, with their foolish waies; but covetousnes growes upon a man in his age, the nearer a man growes to the earth, the greedier he is after the earth, his mouth will be full of earth one day, and yet *quo minor via, eo plus viaticum*, the lesse way he hath to goe, the more tenacious he is.

4. Which is the principall thing, it is a most dangerous sinne, a sinne of a dangerous and a hideous consequence. I thought now to have demonstrated it by some places of Scripture, wherein I should set downe the black stampe, and fearefull name that this sinne hath, so fearefull that it should make every man shie of it, and abhorre it, yea, the very thoughts of it; for there is not a blacker sinn in all the booke of God, in some respects, of an ordinary morall sinne, then this sinne of covetousnesse.

Some examples I should give, I shall briefly touch some of them, besides many *negative examples* which Divines doe observe: there is not any one man in Scripture which was noted for a godly man, which hath ever beene tainted with this sinne of covetousnesse; not any one example, though you may meet with examples of many sins, yet with none of this: *Noah* was touched with drunkennesse, *David* with murder and adulterie, *Peter* denyed his master, we shall not meet with any

any one instance, that the Scripture approves for a godly man, that was ever tainted with this sinne, it is so little kin to godlinesse : not that I will say, that there never was any; yet it shewes, it is very farre from pietie and Christianitie, from the way thereof : and those affirmative examples that we have of any that were covetous, we shall see they are set downe unto us, to shew, that they are most contemptible persons, as the most vile and odious persons to be abhorred. I had thought also to have shewed it by ground of reason : briefly in generall, to touch it but in a word, reterring the main of this, the application, to the next time. There betwo things, by which a man may see the danger and follie of this sinne of covetousnesse.

1. *It opposeth all the good of nature, and all the good of grace,* it checks all graces, and the wayes thereof, and the whole Spirit of grace, it casts a dampe and chokes a man from hearing the Word, from doing the worke of the Lord, and thriving by the meanes of grace, it stifles every grace in the soule, the groweth of it, it chokes all the good of nature, so that a man that is tainted with this sinne, hath not common humanity, no bowels of compassion, as though he were made of flint, it doth so farre estrange him from the power of the excellency of grace, that it degrades him of all the sweetness of nature.

2. The second generall thing is, that it *exposeth him to all kinds of wickednesse*, there is no evil, whether of *sin* or *punishment*, but covetousnesse exposeth a man to.

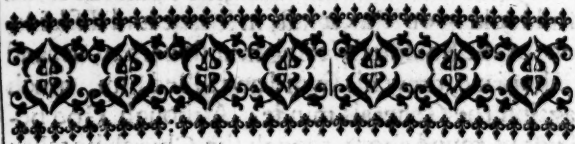
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1. It leads a man into a thousand snares, hee which is once set on with a greedy desire after the world, will not sticke to commit any sinne in the world, to run upon the swords point, hee is drawn into the trap by the baite: suppose a man hold a peece of gold at the end of a sack; the Divell hee doth so, a covetous man he will creepe into the sack to be caught by the Divell, and cast into hell; while he goeth into the sack after the gold.

It *exposeth a man to all kind of punishments*, both because it takes away all that watchfulnesse, that men observe not the season of danger: hence it is, that our Saviour wisheth them, *to take heed of being overcome with surfeiting, and drunkennes, and the cares of this life, lest that day come on them unawares*: a man which is laden not only with drinke, but with luxury, he grows wanton, and so minds not when evill approacheth to avoid the storme; this is the drie drunkennesse, the cares of this life, if a man be overburdened, busie, plodding after the world, it makes him forgetfull of himselfe. I remember a Story, of a City in *Sicilia* being beseiged by the *Romanes*, the maine experienced and most artificiall man in the City was one *Archimedes*, he used many devices, and did many wonders, but at last for all his stratagems the City was surprized, the Souldiers brake in, and great meanes was made to finde out *Archimedes*, at last, the Souldiers hearing where he was, brake into his house, and he was in his Studie, he never tooke any notice that the Citie was taken, when the Souldiers opened his Study doore, they found him busie, drawing lines in
the

dust, like some Mathematician, the Souldiers stood still looking on him, at last, in scorne and disdain, one of the Souldiers, seeing him so barbarous, and inhumane, drew his sword and killed him, much against the Generals minde: Although God besseige us round about, though the Church be taken and surprized, though a mans owne house bee in danger, yet if a man be busie, drawing lines in the dust after worldly things, he will take no notice of any thing, nor use any meanes to prevent it, see no danger, and so not be able to avoid danger.

Lxx



LUKE, Chap. 12. Ver. 15.

*And he said unto them, take heed
and beware of Covetousnesse.*



Here was one point of Doctrine that we propounded out of these words, and it was this, that covetousnesse was a sinne, subtile, universal, tenacious, and dangerous: cautiously to be avoided by all, and carefully to be watched and warded against.

Two things wee propounded in the handling of it.

First, to shew what was meant by covetousnes, which we have already done.

Secondly, to speake something concerning the predicate, what we affirme concerning it: which we came to the last time: briefly to give you the heades.

In respect of it self, covetousnesse, foure things we affirmed.

First, that it was a subtile sinne, nor easily discerned.

Secondly,

of Covetousnesse.

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Second, a universall sinne, scarce any, more or lesse, but are covetous, all are tainted with it.

Thirly, that it was a tenacious sin, that sticks fast, and cleaves close unto us, &c. Covetousnesse is so revitted into men, that we can hardly get it out.

Fourthly, it is a sin of dangerous consequence and great importance: I shall only a little enlarge upon that, it being the maine thing in the point; I will illustrate that, partly by *Scripture*, partly by *reason*. I mentioned then, (though I shall not name all) that there were many pregnant Texts of *Scripture*, which represent unto us, the dangerous nature and condition of this sinne: *Colossians 3. 5. Mortifie therefore your members which are upon the earth, fornication, uncleannesse, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousnesse which is idolatry*; make there, how covetousnesse is yoked, and what is the consequence of it, although it be a farre more subtile sinne, hardly discerned, yet it is ranked with fornication, the sinnes that all the world cries shame of, the Spirit of God ranks it among those: nay more then so, it sets a specfall brand on that above all the rest; many doe penance for fornication, scarce did ever any for covetousnesse, the world takes no notice of such persons, the world hath set adulterie in a white sheet, but God himselfe hath stamped a black brand on it, *covetousnesse which is idolatry*; it is true, there is no sin that carrieth the heart inordinately towards any creature, but it may be termed idolatry: the harlot is the lustfull mans idoll, he makes an idoll

G

of

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of her : preferment and honour is the ambitious mans idoll, it leades him to it, but yet we doe not find that the Scripture doth expressly brand any other sinne, which is not directly idolatry, with that name, but only covetousnesse : I conceive, to omit other things, there is one thing, as the particular reason of it, which is very considerable (for there is a generall reason for other sinnes,) which is this, what a man preferres before God, that hee makes as his God, exalts it in the throne of God, and therefore for that generall reason, covetousnesse is called idolatry : But there is a speciall evil in covetousnesse which makes it idolatry in a deeper dye, a covetous man besides that in the generall respect, his money is his idoll in the particular, he puts trust in it, he hath a confidence in it, and that is the greatest honour that God can have, when we can put trust, and secure our selves, and beare our selves out upon Gods protection, and in that respect, there is a great deal of propriety in those words to this sinne : *for which things sake the wrath of God commeth upon the children of disobedience, vers. the 6.* It is not only true of other sinnes, which may be taken notice of, but to provoke God in this secret sinne, which the world takes not so much notice of, for this thing the wrath of God commeth upon the children of disobedience.

One remarkable place wee have in the first of Timothy 6. 9, 10. *But they that will be rich fall into a temptation, and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtfull lusts, &c. For the love of money is the root of all evil, which while some coveted after, they have erred*

red from the faith, and peirced themselves through with many sorrowes: this is as full a place as I can well conceive: those that will be rich, that are mad after the world, they are in a most dangerous condition: such men cast themselves upon a thousand dangers, every expression, every word is full of weight, I will not take it now on me, to dilate at full unto you on them, I will leave it to your owne thoughts: *It is the root of all evill*, I will only speak of this, it is true, any sinne which is predominant, may be the universall root of all evill in that man, so that it may be applyed farther then the matter of covetousnesse, but yet there is something emphaticall in covetousnesse above other things, that precipitates a man into all evill, for that man which is set upon gaine, will not stick upon any evill course that may advance him that way, it perverts the eyes of the wise, makes them blind, that they can see no danger: thus we see, that it is the root of all those evils, which do arise in that man which is bent upon covetousnesse; but there bee some other men which goe not upon the root of covetousnesse, but upon some other grounds, and so may breake into many evils.

And therefore there is a caution to be observed in these words, *all kinds of evill*, which is a large word, for covetousnesse will not put a man into all kinds of evill, if you take it in the strict signification, for it will not put him on prodigality, not in an ordinary course, I say, further then to advance covetousnesse, *unicuique aliquis est sumptus qui vult facere lucrum*, a man must bee at cost to

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gaine oftentimes : but to adde another place.

Another place to prove this, is in the 16 of Luke verse 14. *And the Pharisees also who were covetous heard all these things, and derided him :* A covetous heart is so farre out of frame towards any good, from any possibilitie of recovering him to a good estate, that the meanes of grace are but a scorne and derision to him: our Saviour himselfe, I dare bee bold to say, the proudest and most captious man in the world could not except against his Sermon : happily in any mans Sermon there may bee some infirmitie or weaknesse, so that a man may except against it, but our SAVIOURS Sermon was not obnoxious to any such thing : And you see covetousnesse made our SAVIOUR himselfe derided ; when men deride wisdom it selfe, this is a high pitch, but covetousnesse doth this : Therefore the Psalmist makes a prayer to GOD, *Psalme 119. verse 36. Incline my heart O Lord to thy Testimonies, and not to covetousnesse :* implying, there is an impossibilitie betweene regarding GODS Word, and covetousnesse : if a man bee inclined to covetousnesse, hee is cleane out of the way from obedience to GODS commands, they are put in the ballance one against an other, and *David* therefore here desires GOD that hee would incline his heart to keepe his Testimonies, and therefore that hee would keepe him uprightly, free from covetousnesse.

1 Corinthians Chap. 6. vers. 10. compared with

Ephes-

Ephesians Chap. 5. verse 5. you shall finde that covetousnes bars a man out of Heaven, there is the very same observation which I propounded in the first place, *Know you not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdome of God, nor Thieves, nor covetous:* observe, that covetous persons are rancked with uncleane persons, and with Thieves, they goe altogether, for they are no better then Thieves on the High-way in Gods estimate, and shall as much bee barred out of Heaven, how smooth a sinne soever it seemes to bee, such cannot inherit the Kingdome of God, *1 Corinthians 5. 10. 11.* *Not altogether with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous, &c.* It is such an odious sinne and so abhorred of God, that God would have all men to abandon it, but especially his owne people, and therefore amongst other persons which are vicious and sinfull, hee warnes the faithfull not to eat with a covetous man: and therefore in the 11. verse, *If any man that is called a brother, bee a fornicator, or covetous, &c. with such an one no not to eat:* It is strange to see that they are so contagious, and loathsome, the Scripture saith no more of a *Leprous* person, but onely, that he should bee separated from the Congregation, there is as much said of a covetous person, one which is in the Church, and professeth the Christian Religion, as for other men of the world, this is not meant of them here, but if any man which is a Saint of God bee covetous, with such a

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man not to eat, they are excommunicated out of the societie of Gods people, covetousnesse doth not only barre a man out of Heaven, but it bars a man out of heaven upon earth, from the communion of Saints, and also from all things honourable in a Common-wealth, or Church: covetousnesse makes a man unfit to rule, *Exo. 18. 21.* Moreover thou shalt provide out of all the people, able men, such as feare God, men of truth, hating covetousnesse, and place such over them, to be rulers of thousands: a man is not in Gods choise capable of the magistracy, if he be covetous: and there is very great reason for it, for that man that is a slave to his lust, is not fit for that place, it is not to be expected there will bee justice done by him, if he sag too much upon the purse side: for that will keep down the ballance of justice that it shall not goe right.

A man is not capable of honour in the Church, if he be covetous, *1 Timoth. 3. 3.* Not given to Wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre, but patient, not a brawler, nor covetous: A Pastor or teacher of the Church of God, should feed the flock of Christ, and rule well, and therefore should be free from covetousnesse, nay, and hate covetousnesse, for they that are covetous, are like to looke more, and aime more at their owne advancement, how they may advance themselves, and at their owne gaine, then at Gods glory, and the good of soules: and therefore not fit to governe in a Church.

2. Besides these testimonies of Scripture, let me adde some examples, some I mentioned the last

'aft day on the *negative part*, that whereas with other fins some of the Saints of God were tainted, as *Noah* was tainted with drunkennes, *David* with murder and adulterie: it is observable, that not one that beares the name of a reall godly man, is touched with covetousnesse. I will only mention those affirmative *examples*, two or three of them, whereby we shall see, that they are as bad as bad may be, which are stained with this vice of covetousnesse, *Laban* was a covetous man, one that the Scripture brands for a base vile person, and sets an ignominious note upon him: *Nabal*, for that was the Anagram of his name: *Nabal* the churle is mentioned with infinite disgrace to be a covetous man.

There is a command given for Kings that they should not bee covetous, and of all men in the world, they have most use of money, for the support of their state, and the defence of their Kingdomes, and yet they are commanded not to be covetous. *Ahab* his covetous humour after *Naboths Vineyard*, is mentioned in Scripture as the root of the ruine of him and his familie, and posterity, there were other fins which followed, but covetousnesse was the root from which all sprung; we reade of one in the new Testament, *Demas* a forward man once in religion; but when once hee came to *imbrace the world*, and cleave to that, it was in him a root of bitterness, he apostatized and fell from Christianity, leaped through all that he had taken upon him before hand.

2. There bee two grounds or reasons of the point

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point, taken from the nature of it.

I. Because covetousnesse is a sin which opposeth all good.

1. It chokes and checks the growth and very beginning of all that is good in a man. I might illustrate this by divers places of Scripture; it *stoppeth the good of grace*, and all the growth of any excellencie in grace, it is those Thornes which stop and choke the growing to perfection, as I have sometimes expressed. The Hedge-hog in the Fable comes to the Connie-berrie in stormie weather and desires harbour, he promiseth faire to lie quiet and the like, but when once hee is entertained, hee never leaves pricking, till hee hath thrust his host out of doores: so it is with covetousnesse, it hath many faire pleas and pretences to get entertainment in a godly heart, it tels him he will be but a frugall steward, but if once it be admitted, it will never leave till it hath thrust out all pietie, and quenched all godlinesse, and heavenly mindednes, all will be eaten up with covetousnes.

2. The very *good of nature* is exceedingly choked by covetousnesse, all bowels of compassion are stoppt towards our owne flesh and blood, there is no noble nor generous thoughts in such persons, they are not ingenuous, but so sordid, that as rust consumeth iron, so covetousnesse consumeth the substance of naturall perfection, it eates out all. Naturalists observe, that those places where there are Mines of silver or gold, they are all barren, affording nothing for the refreshing of man or beast, bearing no graine nor crop; and besides that

that which is worse, they are haunted with Divells, I am sure it is true of a black spirit which is addicted to covetousnesse, it is not only barren of all good, but it exposeth them in whom it is, to the very possession of the Divell, to be led by a base and sordid spirit in all their actions.

2 As it *opposeth all good*, so it *exposeth to all kinds of evil*: there be two sorts of evils; the *evill of sinne*, and the *evill of punishment*, which attends sin, and covetousnesse layeth a man open to both.

1 There is no *evill of sinne*, but a covetous man will doe, the Divell hath hold of him in that vice, and he is at the Divells service for any kind of sin, to draw his purse: there is nothing in the world as I remember is more opposite to covetousnesse in nature then luxury and wantonnesse, a covetous man is temperate of his owne humour, yet covetousnesse prostrates to the basest uncleannesse for hire or gaine that is: the whole spheare of the commands of God doth appeale covetousnesse as the breach of them all: it were no difficult thing (though I have no intention to inlarge so much) to shew that there is no evill but covetousnesse disposeth unto; it takes a man from all good, and prostrates him to all evill.

2 And consequently there is no *punishment* but it layes a man open to: To mention but a word; the wrath of God is the fountaine of all punishment which comes for other finnes, and covetousnesse exposeth a man to the wrath of God, as I have shewed before: but more expressly see Psalme 10. 3. *For the wicked boasteth of his hearts desire,*

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fire, and blesseth the covetous whom the Lord abhorreth: it brings Gods wrath, it brings the scorne and derision of men upon a man, there is scarce any one vice so contemptible to all men in generall, as covetousnesse is, it is the argument of a play to be jeered at on a Stage: which is an argument, that although it carrieth a generall applause with some, yet most men fall foule on covetousnesse, the world spits in his face, hee is jeered at by all men; it exposeth to all kind of judgements, which come either from the wrath of God, or from the hatred of man: I mentioned one thing the last time, and I will but only mention it now; to take up where we left, and make some addition where it is necessary: It makes a man unfit to observe Gods judgements, and so to avoid them, and take care to shun them. A covetous man in the most dangerous time, is so choaked with the cares of the world, that hee mindes not any danger, but plods on till he is taken in the very snare.

And thus much concerning covetousnesse, the predicatē that is affirmed of it, in regard of it selfe: the other thing I shall mention in a word, and so come to the application.

2. In respect of *us*, it is a sinne to be avoided by all men, and by all meanes.

1. By all *men, common men*, that have but any sparke of ingenuitie, must of necessity abstaine from this, and preserve themselves that they bee not foiled with this sinne. But Christian men, which pretend to be the Disciples of *Christ*, must shunne it, especially it being a thing furthest off from

from pietie and Christianitie, there is nothing so unsuitable to, nor so incompatible with Religion: and therefore *fugiat hoc opprobrium a nobis*, it is a shame that a Christian man should be liable to bee upbraided with covetousnesse, and not to have a faire answer for it, because it is scandalous to Religion and dishonourable to God: nay it hinders the progresse of Religion, therefore it is to be avoided by all men.

2. By *all meanes*: our Saviour useth two words here *ῥεγῆτε καὶ φυλάσσετε*, first *ῥεγῆτε*, looke well to thy selfe, as if he had said, *watch and take notice of thy self*, lest thou doe slip, looke narrowly to your courses and wayes, lest you be overtaken with this sinne, and this is not enough *ῥεγῆτε*, but *φυλάσσετε*, it is a place of danger, danger lyeth therein: as you would in times of danger redouble your watch in the Citie, so here should be a strong ward kept, to arme and fortifie, antidote and strengthen your selves with all the strength you can against the danger of this sinne, and this ariseth naturally from the former, for if covetousnesse be so dangerous in it self, then it concernes all men by all meanes to watch and ward themselves against it.

But I shall passe to the application. If covetousnesse be so dangerous a sinne, it concernes all men then by all meanes to watch and ward themselves against it: many things might be spoken by way of application, but I passe brieve over many: as,

For *Conuiction*, many men may bee arraigned that stand convicted of this vice, if men would well waigh it, and draw out the description of it,

Vse.

Vse I.

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it would fall point blanke upon a great many men which thinke themselves free.

2. For reproofe of them, as being in a foule fault, it may be fouler then they are aware of, men are readie to please themselves in it, and plead not guiltie: if they be free from other sinnes, that they can say, I am not like such a man, they take no notice of this, this subtile sinne moves them not, if they come not within the verge of other sinnes, they slight spirituall sinnes, and as they take no notice of them, so neither doe others, for this sinne (as some other sinnes) comes not within the lash of the Churches censure, the covetous man is not found fault withall; no, neither is the proud man found faultie, there is no man censured for his pride, or his covetousnesse, the world takes no notice of this sinne: yet if it be a thing so dangerous, here is a just reproofe for them. But I passe over these.

3. It serves for *exhortation*, partly that every one would,

1. *Examine himselfe*. I gave sufficient hints, by which a man may try himself, (in my apprehension) in the description, by which any man may receive comfort, by applying them to his own heart and wayes, and seeing, whether in some, more, or all of them, he comes not to be obnoxious to this sinne: I shall only give you two or three cautions, in which others may examine themselves.

1. *Be jealous and suspicious of thy selfe*, it is a subtile sinne, very generall, and universally spread. I know it is reported of *Luther*, that though hee found

found the roote almost of all finnes in him, yet he never found any inclination to covetousnesse, hee was free from that. But for our selves, and our better examination, let us not be secure; but be a little suspicious and jealous that there bee no such propension in us towards it; for there may be, although we are not aware of it. And therefore for your better consideration, take this along with you, upon your examination be not confident, bee a little jealous and suspicious, that there may be a propension in thee towards it: upon tryals take not up foolish conceits upon frugalitie, but be jealous to scan thy heart in this kinde, whether it be inordinate in its propension towards the world: I have given sufficient directions for this already.

2. What you do in this kinde, do it conscienciously, not to cosen thy selfe, but as in the presence of God, and as you will answer him. I have told you that rule already, I would have no man lightly to charge another, nor easily to justify himself, and therefore examine your selvs conscienciously, not as you can stand with the judgement of men by outward appearance, but judge as conscience judges, and as you think you may stand and beare out at the day of judgement, at that strict account you must then give.

3. Labour to bring your mindes and heart to be ingenuous, not to studie shifts and devices, to beare up thy reputation and credit, and so to free thy selfe from it. O it is a rare thing to have an ingenuous spirit, such as that, if a man be not free from a fault, yet he will not be readie to defend it,

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but sweetly and ingenuously to acknowledge it, it is impossible but he that stands upon his points, may be guiltie : I could give you divers touches thereof.

Many men pretend it is not covetousnesse, but frugalitie, providing for posterity, this is no ingenuous spirit, nor plainnesse of heart ? Why then dost thou neglect thy child, and bestowes not good breeding on her or him, but spare a penie and spoile the soule of thy child, and the bodie also ? Why art thou so base, if all be for thy child, as to marrie her, and not to give a portion with her, when all comes to tryall, thou hast no ingenuous spirit, be ingenuous therefore, I say, doe not foolishly cosen thy selfe, but bee willing to see what thou dost see, and baffle not thy selfe with foolish pretences.

4. Suppose the matter be a thing doubtfull, I beseech you stand not upon points with God, to avoide covetousnesse, be *generous*, be farre from covetousnesse, shun all apparances of covetousnes, be noble and generous minded, keep a broad difference and a vast latitude from covetousnesse, if you would bee cleare, make it appeare, be not obnoxious to suspicion, with hinchin and pinching and such basenesse, which makes others, and upon probable reason and good ground, thinke that indeed you are so ; but if you would not be tainted with this dangerous sinne, doe the contrary, be so farre from covetousnesse, that you will rather bee generously magnificent, according to the proportion of your estate, and the nature of the thing: but
this

this is not that I intend, this is the first branch of the exhortation, that men would examine themselves,

2. I desire that men would humble themselves, and see their corruption, and bee affected truly with sorrow for it, even such sorrow as becometh Christians, in that humility of spirit which should bee in us, upon every taking our selvs napping in every sinne? dost thou upon examination find thou art not free from covetousnesse? do not thou stand on thy pantables, as they say, but make amends, humble thy selfe before God, acknowledge the basenesse and vilenesse of thy spirit, that thou art guiltie of that sinne which is abominable to God, hatefull to men, being a scorne and derision to them: and,

3. I desire that men would reform themselves, stay not heere, but take out a new lesson, make progresse to reformation, recover thy self, or if thou be already free, labour to prevent it, in the whole latitude, in all the three *species* which I mentioned in the application, in our judgements, understanding, not thinking too high of riches, in our affections, not cleaving inordinately to them, in our actions, bee not too thoughtfull and carefull for worldly things. to be talking and breathing of earth continually, having nothing at all to speak of but riches. There is a part of the mouth which the naturalists call the *calum*, heaven, it is the upper rooffe of the mouth, there be many men which have no heaven at all in their mouths, no upper part, but all lower, talking still of those base and
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lower things, : avoid it therefore in your talke, in your actions, and in your deeds, be not covetous in scraping in riches, having, nor saving, especially let it not carry thee inordinately either to impious courses, to trample upon God, or unjust or uncharitable towards thy neighbour, or thy self, *thy bodie* to pinch that, or *thy soul* to starve that, or to those about thee, to carry thy self injuriously towards them, in one word, set thy selfe upon reformation, against all the spices of covetousnesse.

For the further prosecution of this, to cut off all other things, I shall only propound those things that may be antidotes against this sinne, and remedies to cure this sinne: both to *recover* those which have been touched with this dangerous sinne, and to *prevent* it for the future : I take them both, and for them both there be two sorts of helpes.

1. Something *habituall*, to take care to furnish thy soule with, that may lock it up, and take up the roome, that there be no roome for covetousnesse in the heart.

2. Something that is *actuell*, to be done by a renewed act, and continually used, for the prevention and the recovering a man from it. I shall but mention the former, for those things which are *habituall*.

1. In *generall*, labour to *establish thy heart with grace*, for vice and sinne is never cast out kindly nor certainly, but by the introduction of that which is contrary, and that is grace: therefore if you would emptie your hearts of sinne, we must *clavum clavo pellere*, as they say, drive out sinne, with driving in
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of grace, as one wedge, if wee would get it out of a hard peece of wood, we must drive in another: so nothing can free us from sinne but the introduction of grace: what can take off darknesse from the face of the earth? nothing in the world but light; so, what can drive out sinne? it must bee grace brought into the soule, otherwise a man may do, as when a man reproves a fault to amend his brother, sometimes hee casts out one Divell with another, for the only true way of driving out sinne in generall, and so this sin of covetousnesse in particular, must be by grace brought into the soule, to have a heart established full of gracious thoughts, inclinations and affections, I shall mention some more especially.

There bee foure paire of graces in particular, which are wonderfull conducting, and effectuall for the dispossessing of this Divell of covetousnesse.

The first paire (for I shall joyne two together) are *Humilitie* and *Temperance*, or sobriety: it may bee some will thinke, those two bee farre off, but I told you in the explication, that covetousnesse is sometimes in an estate of regencie, it is master: sometimes also it is in the estate of a servant, it waikes upon some other sinne: there are two other finnes that covetousnesse doth frequently wait upon (when a man is not overmastered with covetousnesse, that is not his direct sinne) there may be other finnes that will use the service of covetousnesse, have it as a servant: to instance, covetousnesse is a servant to pride, and lust, and to in-

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temperancie, now if a man be of an humble spirit, it will kill these lusts, a man would not aime at a high estate: for the most part men aime at great things rather for pride, because hee would beare a high port in the world, he would be *his master*, as it is said of him in the *Acts*, some great one in the world out of pride; that makes them scrape from this man and from the other, it makes them set upon any injurious course to advance his pride: therefore if any one would keep pridedown, let him learn humility and if a man would keep pride under, that would be a good means to suppress his covetousnesse.

2. *Temperance and sobriety* is another excellent meanes to keepe under covetousnesse: if I bee a temperate sober man, and doe not affect either excessse in diet or apparell, but am content with ordinary dyet and cloaths, and to go in a sober way, what need I tumble so much in the world? a little will serve for necessitie, all is for the back and the bellie, covetousnesse plunges a man into a thousand inconveniences, it makes them lay about them infinitely in the world, because they must live at a luxurious rate, they must goe so fine in cloaths, and have such diet: whereas it might be as advantagious every other way; a man might drive a trade within a lesser compasse, so contract it, it would turne to more advantage, and to his greater glory, if he made his pride exceed in nothing but in intemperancie or greedinesse after the best things, this would cleane turne the channell another way.

3. The second paire of graces, which I would have

have you to fix, increase and cherish in your hearts is the due *love of God*, and the *love of thy neighbour*, and this will be an excellent weapon to keepe under covetousnesse, for if a man do love God, and love his neighbour as he ought, at least it will take him off from all basenesse of covetousnesse, hee will not be base to the service of God, pinching his soule, forbearing to allow any thing to the advancement of the kingdome of *Christ*, nor will he bee injurious to oppresse and defraud his neighbour, if he be not altogether for himselfe, for covetousnesse ariseth extremely from selfe-love, when a man regards not God, nor his neighbour, hee cares not whom he pinches from, so hee may advance himselfe, now the love of God and of his neighbour will be a great preservative, and therefore labour to ingraff those affections in thy heart.

3. The third payre of graces which I would have you to labour for, is *heavenly mindednesse and contentednesse*, if a man be heavenly minded, that his face is towards *Jerusalem*, towards heaven, if that be the great designe of his life; it will infinitely keepe him off from covetousnesse, he will not stoop to those base things as rich men do, because he hath more high thoughts, and a more generous aime, his mind is not set on the world, but on heaven: what needs he trouble himself with the cares of the world, which hath placed all his happinesse in heaven. And so for a contented spirit, as the *Apostle* speakes, *godlinesse with contentednesse is great gaine*: and for he which can frame himselfe to a contented spirit, a little will suffice, if he have

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but food and raiment, meere necessities, a contented spirit can rest quiet, and not restlessly reach after great things in the world.

4. Labour to get and to cherish both *faith* and *spirituall wisdom*: it would be an excellent preferuative in this case, if a man get *faith*, a true and lively *faith*, and adherence to *Christ*, bring *Christ* into thy heart, the love of *Christ*, and the prizing of him, and adherence to *Christ*, will infinitely make *Dagon* fall; as *Dagon* fell before the Arke, so this breakes the neck of all sinnes, all will fall to the ground, and particularly this base sinne, *faith* in the assurance of Gods promise, that I believe the promises of God in his word, that he will not leave, forsake, or faile them in their necessities; which are carefull not to faile in dutie towards him: this *faith* will bee an admirable antidote against couetousnesse.

Spirituall wisdom also is a great helpe, for the root of all the poyson is not any defect in the actions or affections, but in the understanding; if men were wise to know the great good, and to desire what was most desirable and advantageous for them, they were then in the right way, to put themselves towards that great thing: but if men bee foolish and thinke all lieth in wealth, nothing else is worth talking of but wealth, nothing will make a man really good, which hath any feeling wth it, but so much wealth; if a man be thus poysoned with these foolish conceits, he will despise and undervalue all the wisdom, and all the godlinesse, and the excellencie that is in any man, mea-

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asuring all excellencie according to a mans estate, as indeed the world goes too farre this way, all Magistracie is chosen by estate, all reputation by estate, these things do secretly poyson, and as the wiseman saith, that estate will never excell in vertue, in which there is a high price set on riches: If men would get spirituall wisdom to discern the excellency of things, and to moderate a mans selfe according to the worth of things, it would bee a good meanes to keepe backe the overweaning after wealth, which hinders the growth of goodnes, and advances covetousnesse.

There be those habituall graces, that must bee gotten into the heart.

1. I shall give you a briefe touch of the other branch. There be some other things *actuell* to be done, which are of great importance: I will mention all in foure steps and degrees, and but merely name them.

1. We must watch. 2. We must pray. 3. We must strive. 4. We must meditate upon those things which may give us victorie.

1. Wee must watch against it, and take heed lest we be surprized and drawn unawares to it.

2. We must also pray against it, many finnes we fall into, because we beg not Gods assistance, if we would pray ingenuously, and sincerely, as David did, *Lord incline my heart unto thy testimonies, and not to covetousnesse*. If men make their daily prayers unto God, especially those which finde themselves prone thereto, as every one should do against his master sinne, it would be an excellent

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3. We must *strive* against it, labour to mortifie these our members on earth, and this amongst the rest, we must strive continually and wrastle against this corruption, not cherish it, and make a darling of it, and cockering it, because the gaine is sweet, but because the sinne is odious, therefore we must strive against it.

4. Lastly, we must *meditate* upon those things which are conducive to establish the soule against covetousnesse, I will runne them over in generall because I cannot go through the particulars.

1. Consider the *events of it*, which I named formerly, if we did but consider how much it opposeth all good: it *choakes* all gracious thoughts and all the means of grace: the very word of God is choaked, when a man is brim full of this error, then Gods word cannot enter; it opposeth and *choakes all the good of nature*, a man becomes like to a beast, or Tiger, he hath no bowels of compassion, a man hath no noble ingenuous thoughts in him that is covetous, hee is all blurred with dirt, and the image of God is blotted out.

2. Consider how it *exposeth* to all kindes of evill both of sinne and punishment: first, of sinne against God, and against his neighbour; yea, against himselfe, he is injurious to all: and as it exposeth to all evill of sinne, so secondly, to all evill of punishment, to the wrath of God, to the scorn of men, to all punishments, in this life and the life to come, it barres a man out of heaven, and from any reputation on earth, not capable by Gods law of

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any excellencie, neither (if all were well) should be by mans law. And for those arguments, I should have propounded which our Saviour mentions in this discourse immediately after the Text, I know not any in sacred or prophane writings, where it is so admirably pressed as it is here, and in those paralell places which I mentioned before. Now there bee two steps and degrees of those arguments.

First, hee labours to *beat it out of him that disturbed him.*

Secondly, *out of his Disciples.*

First, our Saviour deales more generally with those of his ranck, he which came to disturbe him in his heavenly course: and then hee proceeds to other arguments to take off his Disciples.

In generall this he saith in this very verse, that men of great estates in the world, are *mistaken, a mans life or happines consists not in riches*, a man may be a happie man although hee bee not a rich man, but he cannot be a happie man by vertue of that he is a rich man, a mans happines and excellency lieth not in riches, that is the argument in generall.

And something in particular is mentioned also in the parable which is remarkable: as,

First, riches will not free a man from cares, riches brings its cares with it: here is a rich man, his ground bore a great crop, yet hee was to studie what he was to doe, he was full of cares and thoughts what to doe, how to dispense and employ his riches: they are so farre from emptying his heart of cares as that they fill a mans heart with

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new cares, how to secure them, and to dispose of them, it settles a thousand other thoughts in the heart; so that they free not from cares.

2. Nay, it brings not so much as *delight*, *for* *thou hast much goods laid up for many yeares*, it brings not a man to this, it doth not secure a man in a way of delicacie, that a man may enjoy his pleasure and doe his will, which is the ground of a mans aimes, his end which he aimes at: if I had an estate I might eat, and drink, and sleep, and then do what I would, this is not the thing.

3. It doth not bring a man to wisdom, nor argue a wise man: for there is a counterbuffe to that (*thou foole*) that man that thought himselfe so jolly a wise man, because hee had so great an estate, our Saviour gives him here but the foole, it doth not put a man into the possession of wisdom, nor argueth any wisdom, to get a great estate: these are arguments in brieffe of our Saviours discourse to him that interrupted him.

2. There are other arguments that he used to his Disciples, which are proper only to Christians: I shall give you but a brieffe touch of the same.

There is a double care, a *worldly care*, and a *heavenly care*, our Saviour gives a touch of both, speakes something of either, for both will serve for the beating downe of covetousnesse.

I. And concerning *worldly cares*, I will tell you what our Saviour saith concerning them.

1. *Worldly cares* they are more then brutish, it is a senselesse thing to trouble a man with the cares

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of the world, our Saviour shewes that the beasts are provided for by God; those that neither sow nor reape, and therefore is more then brutish to be over carefull.

2. It is altogether fruitlesse and bootlesse, there is no boote nor benefit which comes thereby, not one man by his care *can adde one cubit to his life*, no mans care can make him rich, it is Gods blessing, and not immoderate caring.

3. It is a needlesse care, to trouble a mans self with cares: what need a child of two yeares old take care what he should eat to dinner or supper, or what cloaths he should have? his parents will looke to that: so it is here, God takes care for his children, what need his servants take immoderate and inordinate care?

4. Nay, it is a *heathenish care*, and a faithlesse care, the Gentiles do those things, they seeke after them, it is enough for Heathens which have no God, nor any promise made to them, to be so carefull after these outward things, unlesse a man will shew himselfe worse than a heathen, he must not practise covetousnesse.

5. Lastly, it is very *hurtfull*.

1. It *fetters the heart*, and binds that in chains, for *where the treasure is the heart needs must be*, it glews a mans heart to the world, and keeps him off from God: and,

2. It hinders the passage of preparation or meeting with God, or expecting the day of *Christs* coming, we cannot have a glympse of his coming, or be ready to looke for him, if we be puz-

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ling here below, and thus much our Saviour speakes by way of argument against covetousnesse and inordinate cares of this life.

2. In stead of that worldly care, he expresseth the contrary, concerning *the care of heavenly things.*

1. It is a *more easie care, and more easie gaine*, in the 31. vers. *first seeke the kingdome of God and his righteousnesse, and all these things shall be added unto you*: all other things which are necessary, will come easily to us without caring: God will cast them into the bargain a sower waight.

2. A man shall have a *richer bargain*, what ever other things may bring, it may a great estate, but it cannot make a man a king; nor bring us to a kingdome, *feare not little flock, it is your fathers pleasure to give you a kingdome.*

3. It brings more *continued and durable gain*. If a man have great store of money in his chests and coffers, thieves may breake in, and a thousand other things may happen, but if we have treasure in heaven, that brings gaine that we cannot loose: these are the maine things by which our Saviour labours to beat downe covetousnesse in his Disciples, and those that will follow him: there were some other things, I thought to have added.

1. From the consideration of riches it selfe.

1. That they are not so *considerable*, nor so *desireable things*.

2. They are not so *beneficiall*, they will not preserve a man from danger.

3. They are *altogether uncertaine*, riches will take their wings, when a man hath laboured all

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his life long to get riches, he may loose them all at a clap: souldiers, or warre, or fire breakes in, and what hast thou of all thou hadst, all is uncertaine.

4. They are *exceeding unprofitable*, nay, more then unprofitable.

5. *They are dangerous*, they breed a thousand vices, as selfe-love, and selfe-confidence: the rich man puts his trust in his riches, in his wedge of gold: so is taken off from God, it breeds pride and puffs up the minde of a man *κεφαλὴν ὑψὲς ὡς οὐρανὸν*: so that his head stands I know not how farre above his shoulders, it breeds a great deale of licentiousnesse, men think they may do what they list if they be rich: they are farre off from God, it puts a man into a thousand evill courses, as riches are nothing considerable in them which are so greedy.

2. *A competencie, or a moderate estate*, (if men would be truly perswaded) is more desirable a thousand times. *Agurs* condition is the most desirable in the world, *Give me neither povertie, nor riches, but feed me with food convenient for me*, the best condition and the most desirable, is neither to have great matters, it is a foolish thing to be greedy: nor on the other side to be in extremity. But a moderate and competent estate, such an estate as I have sometimes expressed, is like unto glasse in the windows, that will be the best, which although it keepes out winde and weather, yet it keepes not out the light of the Sunne, the prospect of heaven, such an estate that will keepe a man from the injurie of the world, that a man shall not bee in want, as will keepe out extremitie: that I bee not

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anoied with extremitie, is desireable, and not so great an estate, as will keepe out the sunne of Gods countenance, whereas a great estate may do it; it may make us coverous, and such a man is incapable for godlines, untractable for the Ministerie: A moderate estate is most desirable thing in the world.

FINIS.

